

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Volume 3 Issue 1, January 9, 2004

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## Message from the Mayor A Year in Review 2003

It's amazing how quickly a year goes by. Twelve months ago, I outlined an agenda for the District of Columbia during my Inaugural Address. At that time, I laid out goals and objectives in three priority areas—public safety, education, and opportunity for all.

I am pleased to say that we have made significant progress in all of these areas.

### Public Safety

First, we've made solid progress in public safety. Homicides, which were up by more than 25 percent over last year in early May, ended the year down more than 6 percent. Overall crime was down about 2 percent for the year.

We have dramatically reduced the call pickup time in our 911 center. We hired 59 additional police call takers and 15 Fire and Emergency Medical Services call takers.

We secured funding in the budget for 120 additional firefighters in Fiscal Year 2004. We completed a comprehensive upgrade of our emergency radio system that now provides our first responders with the most complete and reliable public safety radio coverage in the nation.

### Education

In November, we launched wrap-around social services in 15 schools in the District. Coordinating the delivery of such services in the schools enables students and families to access resources in a familiar, central location. Agencies can now assess the needs of clients and share information that can and will provide a more holistic approach to some of the most persistent social problems affecting many of our young people.

Last January, I talked about how we must turn around our literacy problem in the District. In July, as part of my Literacy Initiative, we hired 20 lifelong learning coaches. These 20 instructors help connect residents with jobs and opportunities. Among their many duties, the coaches provide adult basic education and English as a second language instruction.

And, we expect the Senate to approve my plan for school choice in the District of Columbia. This program will bring \$40 million of new federal funding to our public education system—\$13 million for roughly 1,800 certificates, \$13 million for DC Public Schools and \$13 million for charter schools.

### Opportunity for All

Over the past year, we worked hard to provide opportunities for our residents—in housing, jobs, health care and economic development. As a city, we have come a long way from where we stood just a few years ago.

To date, we have helped finance more than 12,000 units of affordable housing in every ward of the city. That's a total of \$1.1 billion in affordable housing development. And this figure includes more than \$650 million in affordable housing east of the Anacostia River.

Every day, we are helping residents find jobs. In June we opened a One-Stop Career Center for Veterans. In September, we opened a mobile one-stop career center that brings career experts into our communities to help link residents to jobs.

And we're providing residents with quality health care in record numbers. We have renegotiated contract terms with the Health Care Alliance hospital partners, and we are ready to invest millions to renovate primary care facilities across the District. Earlier this year, the Kaiser Foundation recognized the District as the city with the lowest number of uninsured persons per capita in the nation.

Together with the DC Council, we are moving forward with Howard University to establish a privately run, 110-bed hospital on District-owned land to meet the future in-patient needs of our citizens. The new hospital will supplement Howard's existing facility on Georgia Avenue.



## AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

## Mayor's Message (con't)

Through our economic development efforts, we are creating opportunity for residents while at the same time increasing our tax base. In March, we opened the new Washington Convention Center. It will bring 3 million people annually, generating an estimated \$656 million in DC and \$776 million in the metropolitan region annually. Bookings at the center now extend through 2013.

It is through the hard work of my administration, the Council and the many independent agencies that make up the District government that we have been able to make such strides. I look forward to an exciting and productive 2004! If you have ideas or insight, please visit our website to send me an email: [http://dc.gov/atd/atd\\_askthemayor.asp](http://dc.gov/atd/atd_askthemayor.asp).

## Connecticut Avenue Bridge Lighting

On December 23, I joined about 35 local officials and residents to flip the switch on eight historic lights (two at each corner) on the Connecticut Avenue Bridge over Kingle Road. This spectacular bridge connects Woodley Park and Cleveland Park, two vibrant and historic pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented communities.

Employees of the District's Department of Transportation, led by Director Dan Tangherlini, performed the work on the historic lamps for less than \$10,000. Rekindling the lights is another example of how we're committed to historic preservation, which will continue when we rehabilitate the Connecticut Avenue Bridge (built in 1931) starting in the summer of 2005. The rehabilitation will restore the ornamental lanterns, trolley poles and other architectural features, add street lights to the bridge's trolley poles and refurbish the masonry at the lantern pedestals and stone benches. DDOT is also applying to designate the bridge a DC landmark and to put it on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Three years ago, we hoisted four reconstructed lions onto the Taft Bridge over Rock Creek. These lions contributed greatly to the historic character of the Woodley and Cleveland Park communities. With the rekindling of the eight lights, we made another contribution to these communities.

Community representatives at the event included Tersh Boasberg, head of the DC Historic Preservation Review Board, Laurence J. Aurbach, president of the Woodland Normanstone Neighborhood Association, and Sally MacDonald, ANC Commissioner.

## Employee Profile

### Rick Love

Senior Counsel with the Office of the Corporation Counsel (OCC), Rick Love, will receive this year's Beatrice Rosenberg Award for Excellence in Government Service. The award, which will be presented on March 19 at the 2004 Judicial and Bar Conference, honors "a member of the Bar whose career in government service exemplifies the highest order of public service." The 2003 winner was Lawrence Wallace, former senior deputy solicitor general. Charles Reischel and Luis Rumbaut are past winners from the Office of the Corporation Counsel. Mary Wilson in OCC's Appellate Division nominated Rick for the award, and Corporation Counsel Bob Spagnoletti seconded the nomination.



Rick Love

Rick started with the Corporation Counsel in 1979 as a law clerk in the Abuse and Neglect Section while still a third-year law student. After graduating and passing the Bar, he became a trial attorney in the Juvenile Section of the Criminal Division, where he prosecuted more than 100 trials ranging from theft and drug conspiracy to rape and homicide. In 1983, Rick transferred to the Civil Division where he spent six years litigating civil actions on behalf of the District. Next, Rick spent six years as the Chief of the Correctional Litigation Section of the Corporation Counsel, supervising about 10 attorneys and several support staff responsible for defending the DC Department of Corrections and its employees in local and federal court in a wide variety of constitutional, civil rights, and common law tort litigation, including class actions regarding prison conditions. Rick then became Special Assistant to Corporation Counsel Charles Ruff, and then Special Counsel to Corporation Counsel John Ferren.

Since 1999 Rick has been Senior Counsel in the Equity Division of the Corporation Counsel. He is responsible for almost all class actions against the District of Columbia and has been instrumental in getting the courts to terminate receiverships in *Campbell v. McGruder*, *Jerry M.*, and *LaShawn*.

Congratulations, Rick, and thanks for doing a great job!



LINK TO OTHER WEBSITES

[DC Agenda](#)

[Hands on DC](#)

[DC Convention and Tourism](#)

[DC Public Library](#)

## Earned Income Tax Credit is Available

Are you one of the 10,000 eligible District of Columbia residents who did *not* claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) last year? If so, I have some valuable information for you. You may have missed out on a tax refund of up to \$5,000. I don't want you to miss out this tax season.

It is my mission to make sure all hard-working District residents know about the Earned Income Tax Credit—a special tax break to workers with low and moderate incomes. My administration is working closely with a coalition of community, business, labor and religious groups to spread the word this year about the EITC— which can be claimed on both federal and DC tax returns. In 2003, our city's residents missed out on about **\$24 million** in federal and DC tax refunds in 2003 because they did not claim the EITC. Let's not allow that to happen in 2004.

Who is eligible for the EITC?

- Families raising two or more children that earned less than \$34,692 might be eligible for federal and DC EITC benefits of up to \$5,000. Families caring for one child are eligible for up to \$3,180 in benefits if they earned less than \$30,666. And workers without children qualify for up to \$478 if they earned less than \$12,230. EITC refunds can help pay for rent, school clothes, a family outing, or even major purchases such as furniture or a car.
- It doesn't matter if you worked part-time or for just part of the year. It doesn't make a difference if you received welfare benefits. As long as you worked at some point in 2003 and earned below these cut-offs, you may be eligible for the EITC.

To learn more about the EITC, call *Answers, Please!* at (202) 463-6211. Staff at *Answers, Please!* also can tell you where to go to get your taxes prepared for free. The District government provides help with DC tax returns at our service centers at 941 N. Capitol Street, NE and 3220 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library and other sites throughout the city will offer tax assistance at other times, starting in late January and going through April 15.

Even if you don't qualify for the EITC, you can help by spreading the word in your neighborhood, at your job, or at your place of worship. Informational fliers and materials are available by going to [www.dcfpi.org](http://www.dcfpi.org).

## Revitalizing the City With Trees

Many of our residents have heard me talk about the importance of restoring our city's tree canopy. I'm happy to report that we're putting forth great efforts to make that happen. On December 6, I joined members of Casey Trees and several volunteers to help revitalize trees in the Barracks Row neighborhood in Southeast.

For years, we have seen a decline in our city's foliage. With economic growth pushing trees to the side and frequent adverse weather conditions, our city's tree canopy is not what it used to be. In an effort to increase the verdant look of our city, Casey Trees along with several partners has taken the opportunity to plant 77 American elms along Barracks Row to help with the re-greening of the District.

This event capped the end of Casey Trees' first year of planned tree-planting in the District. Overall, 250 American elms and 20 additional trees have been planted in every ward of the city by more than 300 volunteers. The first planting took place on Arbor Day April 30, 2003 along G Street, SE and at the Therapeutic Recreation Center. The first disease-free American elms were planted there.

With the planting of an additional 400 trees this spring, the District will for the first time see an increase in the number of trees since the devastating outbreak of Dutch elm disease in the 1970s. Over the past year, the city has also removed 1,350 dead trees. Our estimate for the number of trees necessary to fill empty "plantable" spaces is about 23,000.

Our work at Barracks Row in Southeast is also a prime example of how we are fulfilling my vision for a revitalized Anacostia waterfront. Barracks Row is a vital component, and now a shining example, of that initiative. It will add to the economic, environmental, and cultural revitalization of this area of our city.

As Mayor of our city, part of my vision for the nation's capital includes a city of safe streets, clean communities and vibrant, thriving neighborhoods. And that means a beautiful, majestic canopy of trees looking down at us.



## African American Heritage Trail Guide Available to the Public

On December 16, I announced that after two years of hard work on the part of many people, the African American Heritage Trail guide is available to the public. This guide is a new and convenient way to explore our city's African American heritage and discover how the capital of the United States is also a capital of African American culture and history.

The African American Heritage Trail is the first public presentation of more than 200 important African American history sights throughout Washington, DC. Ninety-eight of the sites are organized by neighborhoods in this free 52-page, illustrated guide that invites residents and visitors to discover areas such as Greater U Street, Southwest, Old Anacostia and Hillside, Brookland, Georgetown, and more.

The African American Heritage Trail is a project of Cultural Tourism DC, funded by the District Office of Planning's Historic Preservation Office, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the DC Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service. I am proud to serve as Honorary Chair of the African American Heritage Trail Advisory Committee that has shaped the guide.

While history, art, and culture are important in their own right, they can also be tools for economic development. By visiting neighborhoods—stopping to eat, buying a gift, and paying admission fees at private museums—we fuel our city's economy. We support businesses. We create jobs. And we generate tax revenue that can be reinvested in our city's infrastructure.

I encourage residents and visitors to pick up a copy of the city's first official trail guide highlighting African American sights. To learn more about the guide, visit the website of Cultural Tourism DC at <http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/index.htm>.

## Recycling in the District of Columbia

Here in the District, recycling is the law. Recycling is an essential element of our comprehensive solid waste management program and should be part of our everyday lives. By recycling, we recover valuable resources, we lessen greenhouse gas emissions and we reduce our reliance on landfills and resource recovery plants.

Recycling conserves energy and protects our natural resources by reducing the need for raw materials. By recycling, we give back to our environment and we each help improve our city's quality of life.

In 2003, the District government continued its partnership with organizations like the Consortium of Universities, the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington, the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA), the District of Columbia Hospital Association, the DC Business Roundtable, the DC Chamber of Commerce and other commercial partners to develop effective and efficient approaches to recycling practices in all District government owned and leased facilities, and residential and commercial sites.

In-house, a number of District agencies are working together to promote recycling practices. We have instituted new policies and procedures that require the procurement of environmentally preferable products, as well as the implementation of recycling and use/reuse programs.

The DC Department of Public Works (DPW) commercial recycling program is also beginning to take root. Over the past two years, three commercial recycling inspectors have reached out to more than 3,150 businesses, providing technical education and advice on how to institute a cost-effective collection program that complies with the District's recycling law.

In addition, DPW entered into a multi-organizational partnership with the Department of Health Environmental Services, the University of the District of Columbia, and the Project Learning Tree national program to bring professional education tools and training to District schoolteachers. Working with teachers and providing educational tools, the DPW Office of Recycling is building long-term relationships that will enable us to deliver environmental messages to hungry minds.

Each programmatic improvement brings us one step closer to achieving the District's long-term recycling goal of at least 45 percent recovery of the total solid waste stream from residential, municipal and commercial waste.

To learn more about recycling in DC, please contact the DC Office of Recycling's Hotline at (202) 645-8245 for residential and commercial services.



## Mayor's Week in Review

### Mayor Announces Holiday Card Winner

On **December 18**, I presented awards at my second annual DC Public Schools holiday card art contest.

### Mayor Makes Flurry of Media Appearances

On **December 19**, I appeared as a guest on CNN, discussing the possible elevation of the nation's terror threat level to "orange." I also appeared on Fox News Channel on **December 22**, once the threat level had been raised to orange, and on News Channel 8 on **December 23** and **December 29** and **Channel 9** on **December 31**. I also made a few radio appearances. On **December 22**, I appeared on WTOP's "Ask the Mayor" program. And on **December 29**, I appeared as a guest on WOL Live at 5.

### Mayor Helps Open New School

On **December 21**, I delivered brief remarks at the Schattner Center (Jewish Primary Day School), a school that opened at a new location in the District this fall after several years in Silver Spring.

### Mayor Tours New Shelter for Homeless Men

On **December 22**, I visited the District's new shelter for homeless men on New York Avenue in Northeast.

### Mayor Rekindles Lights on Connecticut Avenue Bridge

On **December 23**, I joined officials from the District Department of Transportation and members of the Woodley Park and Cleveland Park communities to relight historic street lights on the Connecticut Avenue Bridge over Kingle Road.

## District Activities



Mayor Williams helped distribute toys to children during the holiday season.



On December 23, Mayor Williams threw the switch on historic lights on the Connecticut Avenue bridge over Kingle Valley during a special relighting ceremony.



On January 5, Mayor Williams presented Roberta Flack with a lifetime achievement award at the 19th Annual Mayor's Arts Awards at the Kennedy Center.



# Community News

- [Mayor Applauds Decision of Casey Foundation](#)
- [Gales School Homeless Facility to Stay Open for 90 Days](#)
- [Mayor Williams Announces Nearly \\$2 Million in Arts Grants](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

1/15	<b>The 19th Annual King Holiday Celebration</b> 6 pm Reception 6:30 pm Program begins University of the District of Columbia 4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW (Bldg. 46) 800 - 21st Street, NW
1/16	<b>Visions of the Future: Defeating Youth Violence</b> 7 pm Washington National Cathedral Massachusetts and Wisconsin Avenues, NW
1/17 to 5/23	<b>DC Builds: The Anacostia Waterfront</b> The National Building Museum 401 F Street, NW
1/19	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade</b> 12 pm Begins at Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and Sumner Road, SE



[View the Mayor's daily schedule](#)